

KUNU

the vengeance of the gods? Was it conscience? Was it ⁷⁷⁶morality? Was it destiny? Was it all of these, traditionalized into one abstract philosophical concept which, for the average Bush Negro, was no more formulated than are the underlying sanctions of any civilization to the vast majority of people who live in it? We sought out Bayo again, Bayo, who had the great kuma, to see what light his own experience would shed.

"Almost everyone has some kind of kuma, Bayo," we said. "Now why is it that Sefefo, who has a kuma, is so careful, while you who, let us say, also have a kuma, seem not to take any notice?"

We had, as a matter of fact, often wondered about this. Why was Bayo so care on the river? Why did he carry himself like a man so much older than he really was? What was behind his great self-confidence? Was it luck? Was it a temperamental carelessness? We had watched his amazing strength in taking up our boat almost singly through the rapids, for Sefefo was so old that when he tried to hold the boat in the current, his arm could give no steadying power to the paddle, and the pole-stick he was too old to use at all. Was it all his luck? Our luck?

He answered circumspcctly. Let us suppose, he explained, that in making him his father and mother had incurred the greatest kuma of all—the kuma that comes from incest. Now, in that case, he, as a child of such a relationship would be a *gomi*, a "child of the earth," for he would belong to the land which was in the possession of his clan, and thus would be doubly a clan member. He would, therefore, be protected by the spirits. For the gods, it appeared, declared a war with the child of such a union and gave him a pass of free constant among the world of spirits. But the children of a man such as this . . . but here he stopped.

"You know," he said, with his delighted smile, "A man who has a kuma like that doesn't talk about it. Kuma aren't talked about. He might not get a wife. . . ."

REBEL DESTINY

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Fa'aka was chief of his clan. He was a handsome man, with a quick, clever eye, and a reputation for great honesty everywhere on the river. To him we appealed for more light on kums. We had met him in his village on our way upstream and we had seen him in the tribal council house when we had sat at the great kums held there by Cooman Yankum. When we stopped again at Fa'aka's village on our way down the river—this village that was so close to Dahomey, the seat of magic—it was evident that the gods favored us. We had come safely through the great rapids. We had stayed at Anindope Lantive in good health, and the spirits had even spoken for us through some of the women whom they had possessed. Fa'aka spoke with greater freedom than we had yet met with.

"There are different kinds of kums, and some are big and are very bad; but some are small and do not make much trouble," he began.

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The greatest kums came from making a child with a member of one's own family, with one's true, true sister or, what would be almost as bad, with a child of one's mother's sister. Murder was a great kums, too, and perhaps even to that was the kums that came to the Bush Negro if he informed to the white man against one of his own kind. Then there were the kums that one got for false accusation, and for repeated stealing, and even for lying, if it were done too much. For lying is not good, lying makes too much trouble among people. And there were many more kinds of kums, some of which he mentioned. Killing a snake or a tiger and not burying it with kums brought on a kums, and cutting down a silk-cotton tree was kums.

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When a big kums came into a family, it wiped it out. One by one the members of the family died. Men died, women died, and children were never born, or they died when they were small. "This goes on until the family is finished," Fa'aka said. A lesser kums could kill as well, but its vengeance would be directed only against the women who carried on the line of succession to office and property, or

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--The Lape lineage is divided into two groups from the genealogical point of view, but marriage between these two factions remains prohibited. The law of consanguinity is rigorously respected within this group.

--The Kurika lineage, which tends by forgetfulness of the genealogy to split into three factions, tolerates union between members of different factions; in 1958 there were seven cases of this. On the contrary, union is not allowed between members of the same faction.

--The Dipele I lineage, whose genealogy is completely known, does not allow marriage between its members, although for several generations it has been cut into two distinct social units, L'Orfèvre Ferde and Agane villages, entirely separated geographically and each pursuing its own lead.

--It is the same for Dipele II, but marriage is permitted between Dipele I and Dipele II.

--The Papiloune lineage allows the possibility of union between the principal faction and the small Papiloune I faction. But there is no marriage between members of the principal faction.

--The Awara Bakia lineage on the contrary tolerates unions not only between the members of its three factions but also recently within the principal faction.

○ Adierine (s.w. S. I. P21) and △ Beale (s.w. S. I. E21)

○ Kyele (s.w. S. I. E20) and △ Pripit (s.w. S. I. P2).

This situation is an aspect of accident to the other groups, and it does not seem that we are present here at the beginning of a general transformation.

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It is to be noted that the possibility of marriage is allowed between the members of groups presumed to be of the same origin but separated for a long time. Also Dipele I and Dipele II.

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Committing phish is one of the most serious offenses that a Refugee Back can commit, of course, as is the one of the moral prescriptions, no shortest principle is called out: the claim teach the children from their earliest years: "If you commit phish, you will fall ill or die." The head of the lineage reflects severe punishment on the guilty people to learn: for the man, to make a large number of phish with an arrow; for the woman, to prepare and weave as preparation for the next to go to several phish from/ of rice, a long and tedious job.

However, if it goes of trouble and takes a man and women of the same phish steadily used as phish, people and up. In the case of peace and quiet, by accepting the at-tempted fact. They go to the phish to make an offering of rice to the ancestors to ask them to forgive the offense committed. No punishment is made to the children born of the union.

In the Awa tribe lineage, which has practically re-jected the law of vengeance, the principle of a sanction remains and there is a process of clearing the guilty ones from the village.

Not being able to use weapons and not having the right to expect a sanction of the lineage, capture and execution can occur in individual matters.

The same source of phish is attached to various members persons of the same phish, although these phish have an effective organization and exist only by the transmission of the fundamental traditions, phish, phish.

Before concluding an official or even clandestine union, the man and woman must see that they do not have the same phish and in such a case give up their project; that, even if they are from different tribes, for example a first woman and a husband.

Feb. 1961

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Generally speaking, the custom of the Bellagun Biao is used to consider as unusual the marriage of a very young girl to an old man, or of a very young boy to an adult woman.

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The custom of family marriage is clearly demonstrated by two events which happened during the summer of 1961. A boy of thirteen and a half, E... of Bessville, left his guardians to join an adult woman, E.... 23 years older than he and with a very bad reputation as being some months later his cousin was married Feb. by a boy of 14 who began living with a woman of 25. Nothing like that had ever been seen, and people disapproved against the scandal of it, but in both cases, guardians and lineage heads showed themselves incapable of making their authority respected by law.

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Marriage of girls. It can still be said (although things are in the process of changing rapidly) that girls, young and, marriage is a piece apart in the thought of the Bellagun Biao, the reputation which attaches women does not extend to them.

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People say that girls "have good manners," and in fact most of them, although called enough for a little spirit, have a reserved attitude, a becoming bearing, which contrasts with the attitude of the married women. To tell the truth, this virtue is not so much due to natural inclinations as to the strict vigilance with which their mothers surround them. The mothers

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trouble to get her out of their sight and permit her not to speak to them out of their presence. "Until dawn, until the cock crows, she keeps vigil," says the song, alluding to the mother who watches over her daughter's virtue. If a girl comes to lose her virginity without being properly married, not in law, "established as a house," it is a disgrace for her mother and her own relations.

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RETURN

For the duration of the mourning, any indication of the mourning spouse will show upon him the proper vengeance of the gods; it is important for him to make himself forgotten, to have a modest and discreet demeanor. The dead person might be vexed with him for having kept his health and good looks. So they try to give the mourning spouse the aspect of a miserable and unfortunate being. The dead person's relatives are particularly concerned in having this discipline observed, for in the opposite case the dead person's ghost would turn back to enquire against his own lineage. During all the mourning the whole lineage must be careful to forget. So custom requires that during all this period the widower (or widow) be placed under the authority of the dead person's lineage.

In the case of overliving, mourning is taken on by the spouse even if the relations have not been made official. People cite the example of Way (Jouville) who married mourning for a sister with whom she had begun to live before he could propose to her officially.

Each of persons is mourning. A widow's case is exactly like that of a widow, which tends to show that in the eyes of the deities like the dead, men and women, have the same level of being and the same power over the living.

The mourning spouse is placed under the protection of the ancestors of the dead spouse's lineage. Without this protection (taken by the power of the members of this lineage, he would find himself defunctive. The goal of it is that the physical reaction against him is to lift the mourning person—by going to the grave (4) to tell the ancestors that one is no longer concerned in him. Then someone continually is coming back (see below the example of Gamble).